

MICHIGAN LEGWORK

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR & ECONOMIC GROWTH

FEBRUARY 2006

Governor Names Paula Cunningham New DLEG Director

PAULA D. CUNNINGHAM, president of Lansing Community College (LCC) since 2000, has been named by Gov. Jennifer M. Granholm to succeed David C. Hollister as director of the Department of Labor and Economic Growth (DLEG).

"Paula Cunningham is the right person at the right time to ensure that our workforce is ready for the challenges of the 21st century," the governor said. "She stands ready to reinforce the stark reality that higher education and workforce training are critical components to Michigan's economic success."

Ms. Cunningham will assume the post March 6, subject to state Senate confirmation. DLEG Deputy Director Bob Swanson will serve as acting DLEG director until her arrival.

This will not be the first time Paula Cunningham has been tapped for service to Michigan state government. Gov. Granholm appointed her to the Michigan Education Trust Board of Directors and the Lt. Governor's Commission on Higher Education & Economic Growth. In addition, former Gov. John Engler appointed her to serve on the Council on Technical Excellence.

Ms. Cunningham was LCC president when the college was awarded a \$1 million grant from the U.S. Department of Energy to support its Alternative Energy Initiative. LCC was the first community college in the nation to establish an associate's degree in alternative energy engineering technology.

The college is also a leader in student pass rates on state licensing and certification exams. Further, LCC's participation in the new accreditation process, AQIP-Academic Quality Improvement Process, has focused the college on an ongoing continuous improvement model that is innovative for higher education.

"I've known Paula Cunningham for more than 20 years and can tell you she's an able administrator and very knowledgeable about workforce development," said former DLEG Director Hollister. "She is ideally suited to carrying on Gov. Granholm's plans for a 21st century economy."

Ms. Cunningham's dedication to education and the community has been recognized by several organizations, including the *Lansing State Journal*, which voted her one of Lansing's Outstanding Women (1999); the Commission on Spanish-Speaking Affairs, which presented her with its Outstanding Citizen Award (1996); and the YMCA, which named her Honorary Achiever of the Year (2000).



Paula D. Cunningham

During her tenure at LCC, Ms. Cunningham served as vice president of the Planning and College Relations Division; executive director of Marketing, Community, and Board Relations; director of Professional Development; and assistant personnel director. She also served as a faculty member in the Careers Division.

She holds a B.S. in journalism and a M.S. in labor/industrial relations from Michigan State University.

She and her husband Darius have a son, Darius II, and a daughter, Dana.

IN THIS ISSUE:

- 2) Director's Message 6) Blood Drives
- 3) People on the Move 7) Blast from the Past
- 4) Farewell Reception 10-13) Katrina Help

A Message from the Acting Director

It is an honor to serve as acting director of the Department of Labor & Economic Growth as we anticipate the arrival of our new director, Paula D. Cunningham. As you read on page one, Ms. Cunningham is a highly respected administrator who comes to us with an ideal combination of knowledge, insight and practical experience to assist our state toward greater workforce development. We can all look forward to working with her.

On Feb. 1, the same day that Gov. Granholm announced the selection of Ms. Cunningham, we were given other good news as well: The U.S. Department of Labor announced that Michigan has been awarded two \$15 million grants under the highly competitive Workforce Innovation for Regional Economic Development (WIRED) program.

We are the only state to receive two of the 13 grants awarded under this initiative. The purpose of the grants is to create high-skill and high-wage opportunities for workers in regions that have been affected by global trade, are dependent on a single industry or are recovering from natural disasters.

In Michigan, the WIRED grants will support the efforts of community partners in two different regions to harness their unique resources as they seek to transform their local economies. The two winning proposals are:

- **Mid Michigan Innovation Alliance, a region that includes 13 counties incorporating Flint, Lansing and Saginaw.** The proposal was developed under the leadership of the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, Genesee County Economic Development Agency, and Michigan State University. A key element of the Mid Michigan proposal is to refocus automotive supplier firms once tied to GM to emerging and growing manufacturing markets as well as the development of an alternative energy sector. This proposal builds on the strong automotive, educational and philanthropic assets of the region.
- **West Michigan Workforce Innovations Lab, a seven-county region anchored by Grand Rapids and led by the West Michigan Strategic Alliance at Grand Valley State University.** The West Michigan proposal centers on an "innovations lab" designed to advance and spawn a wide range of innovations in its regional workforce development system focusing on four areas of innovation. Each region will receive approximately \$15 million over the next three years as well as ongoing technical assistance from leaders of innovation and regional economic growth.

Gov. Granholm is continuing to work closely with Michigan's congressional delegation to seek more federal support for workforce development and job training for workers affected by auto industry restructuring. We are beginning 2006 on a very positive note, which I am confident we can sustain throughout the year.

Sincerely,



Robert W. Swanson

Irma Zuckerberg, Jim Smiertka Named Acting Deputy Directors

Irma Zuckerberg, senior executive assistant, Office of the Director, has been named acting deputy director to fill the role of Dennis Sykes, who is joining David Hollister at the new regional economic development organization called Prima Civitas. Also, Jim Smiertka, special assistant to the director, has been named acting deputy director while Bob Swanson holds the position of acting director. Lori Donlan is now acting director for Media and Public Relations to fill the vacancy of Maura Campbell (see page 3). In addition, Marcia Black-Watson in the Advisory Administration Unit will be assisting Irma.



MICHIGAN LEgWORK

Published monthly for employees
of the Department of Labor
& Economic Growth

Editor: Lynne Breen
Designer: Gina DiNatale Coon

February Issue Contributors:
Susan Bigras, Nirva Civilus,
Valerie Congdon, Linda Cook,
DeWayne Cord, Sharman Cross,
Lori Donlan, Darla Harper, Tom
Healy, Margie Hojara-Hadsell,
Norm Isotalo, James Kivell,
Keith Langworthy, Maria Ley,
Judy Palnau, Yvette Robinson,
Barry Simmonds, Judith
Simons, Angela Simpson, Susan
Turney, Duncan Wyeth and
Cindy Zastrow.

Articles/photos may be e-mailed
to breenl@michigan.gov or
faxed to 517/241-1580. The
Department of Labor & Economic
Growth is an equal opportunity
employer/program. This news-
letter will be made available in
alternate formats on request.



People on the Move

Best wishes to **Maura Campbell**, director of the Office of Media and Public Relations, whose last day with DLEG was Feb. 10. Maura is forming a public relations firm called 3M Strategies with partners Marge Sorge and Marti Welsh. Maura has been with Michigan state government since 1992 and has held public relations administrative positions with the Governor's Office, the Michigan Jobs Commission, and the former Department of Consumer and Industry Services prior to the creation of DLEG. We wish Maura much success in her new endeavor!



Maura Campbell

Happy retirement wishes to **Tama Malamud**, rehabilitation counselor with Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS) in Livonia, who dedicated more than 18 years to assisting Michiganders with disabilities into jobs. Tama worked at the Wayne, Livonia and former Redford offices during her tenure with MRS.

Congratulations to **Anita Friday**, who has been named manager of the Unemployment Insurance Agency's (UIA) Central Support Unit. Central Support handles finance, purchasing, agency contracts and liaisons with the U.S. Department of Labor on the federal budget and grant funding. In addition, the unit administers strategic planning, agency-wide reports and the monitoring of agency deadlines. A graduate of the University of Detroit-Mercy, Anita was an assistant auditor general until joining UIA in 1988 as a staff accountant in the agency's Office of Budget and Finance. She later became chief accountant. In 1999, Anita became manager of the Advocacy Section. Most recently she was a departmental specialist in External Benefit Services.



Anita Friday

DLEG extends a warm welcome to **Martin Gibbs**, who has been named an executive assistant in the Office of the Director. Marty most recently was an executive assistant for legislative affairs in the Governor's Office. His professional background also includes serving as a policy analyst on the Senate Democratic staff; director of marketing, Michigan Nurses Association; public affairs officer, Canadian Consulate General; market analyst, former Michigan Department of Commerce; and director of marketing for an Ann Arbor-based publishing company. Marty has a bachelor's degree in marketing from Michigan State University.

3 The Bureau of Commercial Services has given a warm welcome to **Amy Shell**, new policy spe-

cialist with the Licensing Division. Amy had been an elections specialist for the Department of State, Bureau of Elections, since 1995. Prior to joining state service, Amy worked as an insurance underwriter. She has a master's degree in public administration.

The Media and Public Relations Office extends a warm welcome to its new lead executive secretary, **Keli Edmonds**. Keli comes to DLEG from the Department of Management and Budget, where she was a personnel management assistant for the past four years. She has also served as a personnel management assistant for the Department of Corrections. Prior to joining state government, Keli worked for Aetna U.S. Healthcare in Grand Rapids.

The Management and Technical Services Division, Michigan Occupational Safety and Health Administration (MIOSHA), is pleased to announce that **Cindy Ross** has been named program manager for the Budget/Grants/Freedom of Information Section. Cindy had been working as a financial specialist for the Department of Information Technology, where she served as the budget liaison with five other departments. She is an accounting graduate of Davenport University.

MIOSHA's Consultation Education and Training Division is pleased to welcome two new word processors. **Heather Parrish** will provide administrative support to **Ruth Hindman** and her group of consultants. Heather has five years of office experience. **Jodi Meddaugh** will provide administrative support to **Bill Lykes** and his group of consultants. Jodi has 11 years of administrative experience.

The Michigan Employment Security Board of Review has a new member and chair following the recent appointment of **Stephen M. Geskey** by Gov. Jennifer Granholm. He will represent the general public for a term expiring Dec. 31, 2008. Prior to his appointment, he served as an assistant attorney general with the Michigan Department of Attorney General. A graduate of Michigan State University, he earned his law degree from the University of Detroit School of Law. The MES Board of Review hears and decides appeals of Unemployment Insurance Agency and administrative law judge decisions and orders connected with claims for unemployment compensation. The board also hears and decides appeals concerning the tax liability and assessment of employers under the Michigan Employment Security Act.



Keli Edmonds



Martin Gibbs



Amy Shell



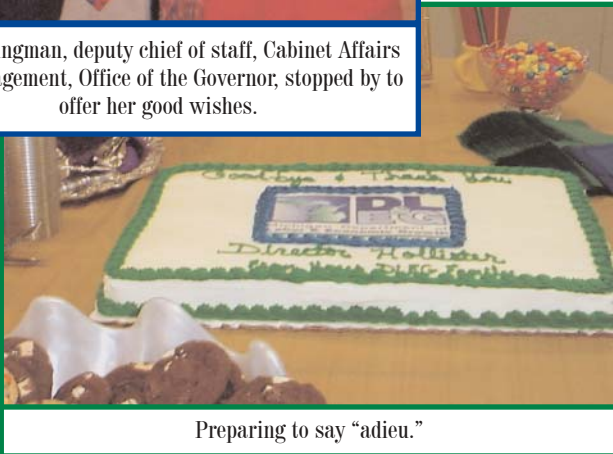
Stephen Geskey

Director Hollister's Farewell Reception

Nearly 150 well-wishers attended David C. Hollister's farewell reception, held Friday, Feb. 3, at the Ottawa Building in Lansing. The former DLEG director will be heading up a new non-profit economic development organization that will work to diversify mid-Michigan.



Teresa Bingman, deputy chief of staff, Cabinet Affairs and Management, Office of the Governor, stopped by to offer her good wishes.



Preparing to say "adieu."



Todd McMyler, Sue McGhee, Jennifer Childs, Brandye Sedelmaier and Holly Mroz with the Office of Financial and Insurance Services gather for a photo with outgoing Director Hollister.

UIA Staff Were Volunteers at Super Bowl

By Norm Isotalo

A number of Unemployment Insurance Agency (UIA) employees were among the thousands who volunteered to help at Super Bowl XL in Detroit.

Kenyetta Harris, System Rewrite Team; Torrie Jackson, BOC/TRA Unit; and Lynda Robinson, Office of Media Technology, served as ambassadors at various hotels in the metropolitan area, where they answered questions about the city and metro area, handed out information about the area and Super Bowl-related events, and offered directions to various venues. The three also helped out at the NFL Experience in Cobo Center.

Rufus Chappell, Detroit RICC, was a "super captain" who managed volunteers, answered their questions, made sure they had the information and materials they needed, and resolved any problems.

Raceine McDonald, Friend of the Court Unit, may have been the only one of the group to actually see the game, as she was working at the game.

Raceine is a part-time employee with SAFE Management, which supplies staff to Ford Field, the site for SBXL. She has worked as a guest services representative at Ford Field since it opened and prior to that had worked at the Silverdome. As a guest services representative, she directs or escorts those attending games to their seats and directs them to services and concessions available at the stadium.

Raciene is also the only one in the group with Super Bowl experience. Last year she worked at the game in Jacksonville, Fla.



Ambassadors to Super Bowl XL were easily identified by their bright SBXL jackets, such as the one being held up by (l. to r.) Torrie Jackson, Raceine McDonald, Kenyetta Harris and Lynda Robinson.

Unemployment Agency Staff Thanked for Work at Temporary Katrina Call Center

A pizza luncheon to thank the more than 100 Unemployment Insurance Agency (UIA) employees who worked in the temporary Katrina call center was held Thursday, Feb. 2, at Cadillac Place, Detroit.

The Katrina Project used staff primarily from support areas in the agency to join a multi-state effort to take Louisiana claims over a national toll-free number while the regular call center staff continued to serve Michigan's unemployed workers.

In addition to the luncheon, UIA Director Sharon Bommarito sent a letter to each of the team members, expressing her gratitude for their efforts.

"You were the voices of hope for so many people," she said. "I realize this was sometimes a difficult experience, but you demonstrated courage and dedication. I want to thank you for the caring and understanding you provided to the Louisiana unem-

ployed workers calling from all over the country. Over 28,000 calls were answered and a total of 8,185 Louisiana claims were processed as a result of your efforts. Thanks to Benefit Services, Management Services, UIA's Executive Office and the Detroit Remote Initial Claims Center for providing the staff to work on this project."



Some 100 UIA employees were honored at the Feb. 2 pizza luncheon.

Professional Activities

Congratulations to **Stephanie Laney**, communications lead worker, Customer Service Unit, Corporation Division, Bureau of Commercial Services, who recently completed a Bachelor of Science degree in criminal justice from Ferris State University. Stephanie's goal is to work in the probation and parole field. This past summer, she served as an intern with the Lansing Police Department.

Duncan Wyeth, executive director of the Michigan Commission on Disability Concerns, was one of the first guests on a new radio program that debuted Jan. 8 on WDTK-AM (1400), Detroit. Called "Disabilities Today on the Radio," the program is an expansion of the PBS television program "Disabilities Today" hosted by veteran broadcaster Roger McCarville. Roger said the live radio program will air every Sunday at 4 p.m. and provide up-to-the minute coverage of current issues facing persons with disabilities.

Congratulations to **Doug Kalinowski**, director of the Michigan Occupational Safety and Health Administration (MIOSHA), who has been named by U.S. Department of Labor Secretary Elaine Chao to serve as a member of the National Advisory Committee on Occupational Safety and Health (NACOSH). NACOSH advises, consults with, and makes recommendations to the Secretary of Labor and Secretary of Health and Human Services on matters related to the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970. Doug will serve as a public member for a two-year term.

The *Kalamazoo Gazette* printed a feature article on Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS) in its Jan. 8 edition, noting that MRS provides services that assist more than 7,000 persons with disabilities into jobs annually. MRS's Southwest Michigan District Manager **Margie Hojara-Hadsell** and Rehabilitation Counselor **Jill Shires** are quoted throughout the article.



Stephanie Laney

UIA Katrina Project Staff

Jacqueline Acuna	Linda Karos
Penny Adkins	Deborah King
Tonya Anthony	Gail Loving
Rabia Attie	Juanita Mayes
Karen Barnes	Pamela McColla
Faith Baval	Raceine McDonald
Yolanda Bell	Diane McManamy
Mary Berry-Williams	Connie Miller
Carrie Bobo	Angela Miracle
Derek Boston	Colottra Moore
Moneeke Bowden	Martha Moore
Sandra Brewster-Brown	Mary Mordi
Beatrice Browne	Lamonica Morgan
Danette Buchman	Sheila Murff
Bronwyn Burton	Rosemary Myatt
Renita Cain	Mohammad Nabulsi
Pamela Caldwell	Pamela Newsome
Yvonne Carter	Andromeda O'Neil
Hazel Chew	Lai Sim Pang
Shirley Clock	Sharon Peterson
Alicia Cooper	Carol Polston
Ruzil Cuizon	Nakia Poole
Carrie Dillon	Maria Pope
William DiSessa	Anita Pyrsock
Linda Dixon	Suzanne Robertson
Martin Douglas	Roynetta Robinson
Claudia Dziadziola	Dorothy Ruelle-Elliott
Susan Easton	Jacqueline Rutherford
Don Eitnear	Tom Sanfilippo
C.L. Flippen	Donna Schmitt
Andrea Gibbs	Diane Sherman
Candra Gissendanner	Debra Singleton
Barbara Glasker	Linda Smith
Tanesha Gordon	Gwen Spence
Sonja Graham	Maureen Stinson
Theresa Hall	Maureen Strachan
Kenyetta Harris	Barbara Studevent
Danielle Hawk	Samuela Swiderski
Greg Hawkins	Lori Talamantes
Jean Hawkins	Lis Tate
Wayne Haynes	Shaun Thomas
Alfretta Head	Diann Thomas
John Henige	Chuck Thornton
Helen Hightower	Clay Tierney
Dorothy Holmes	Russel Walezak
Linda Hunter	Cheryl Warren
Torrie Jackson	Orande Weathers
Terri Jackson	Linda West
Tameka Johnson	Thomas Whitkopf
Cynthia Johnson-Williams	Kimberly Williams
Janice Jones	Brian Wotta
Mary Jo Kaminski	



Lansing UIA Staff Fill Wish Lists of Two Michigan GIs

**By Darla Harper
Lansing PRO**

Leave it to the Unemployment Insurance Agency's (UIA) Problem Resolution Office (PRO) staff in Lansing to overcome bureaucratic red tape to make sure special deliveries reached two Michigan soldiers serving in Iraq.

The PRO and Claimant Customer Relations Hotline staff packed two boxes with donated food and personal care products and sent

them via the U.S. Postal Service to Spc. Nathan Yancer of Athens and Maj. Brian Borek of Plymouth.

First, however, staff had to ensure the care packages got to their faraway destinations by completing the required customs forms, listing the boxes' numerous contents.

The boxes were stuffed with staff donations and then mailed Jan. 7. The soldiers are friends of an office employee who received their wish lists. Spc. Yancer and Maj. Borek were deployed to Iraq in November and August, respectively.

UIA Holds Successful Red Cross Drive

**By Valerie Congdon
UIA Center for Learning and Development**

On Thursday, Jan. 27, the Unemployment Insurance Agency (UIA) hosted another successful blood drive at Cadillac Place in Detroit!

The drive collected 51 pints of blood, which will help 153 metropolitan area patients. Among those giving blood were four brand new donors — Christine Brock from Field Audit, Mohammad Nabulsi and Paula Ponte from UI Tech and Data Control, and Kathy Seymour from the Department of Information Technology.



Preparing to donate are (l. to r.) Christine Brock, Kaduvinkal George, Mohammad Nabulsi and Paula Ponte.

Those who donated blood or attempted to donate not only gained the satisfaction of knowing they were helping someone through their efforts, but they may also win a free trip! The Red Cross and the state of Michigan are giving trips. The Red Cross has a drawing for a trip to Orlando, while the state is offering a weekend at the

Grand Traverse Resort & Spa. The winner of the Grand Traverse getaway will be determined by a drawing in late February.

There are rewards in giving!

Saginaw RICC Will Host Blood Drive

**By Susan Bigras
Saginaw RICC**

The Unemployment Insurance Agency's Remote Initial Claims Center (RICC) in Saginaw will be hosting its first blood drive from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Wednesday, March 29, at the Saginaw Centre. The drive is being held in conjunction with the Michigan Community Blood Center.

The blood donations will be used primarily in hospitals in Bay, Clare, Midland and Saginaw counties. Michigan Community Blood Center is the only provider of blood to all hospitals in these counties.

State employees weighing at least 110 pounds and in good health are encouraged to sign up. Donating blood takes only seven to 10 minutes. The entire donation process takes just 45 to 60 minutes.

To schedule an appointment, please contact Debra Sellner (SellnerDebraM@michigan.gov) or Diane Boroughf (BoroughfDianeK@michigan.gov).

Acting Director Swanson
Was Distinguished Scholar

A Blast from the Past

A DLEG staff person recently came across the May 1964 copy of *The Michigan State University Alumni Magazine* and surreptitiously handed it over to the editor of *Michigan LEGwork*.

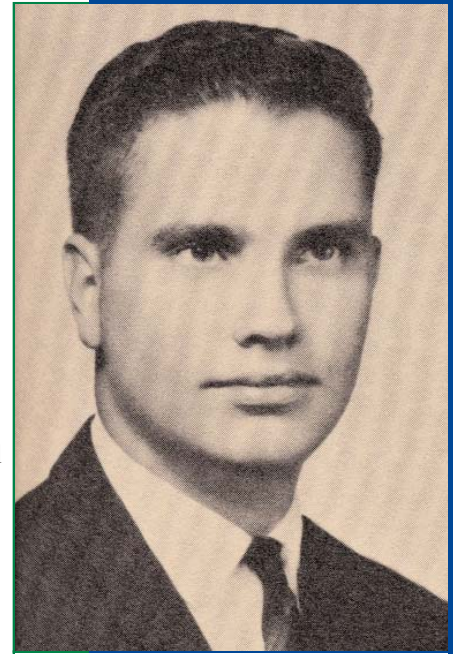
The magazine reveals that when Acting Director Bob Swanson was a senior in high school, he was one of 10 young people from across the U.S. selected for an MSU Alumni Distinguished Scholarship award. The article noted that each of the 10 scholars received \$6,000 as well as an appointment as an undergraduate research assistant.

"Thousands of generous MSU alumni who contribute to the University Development Fund have again 'invested' \$60,000 in 10 of the brightest and most worthy young people in American," said the article.

Bob went on to earn both a Bachelor of Arts degree and a Master of Arts degree from Michigan State University and then carved out a distinguished career in public service.

Prior to joining the Granholm Administration in February 2003, Bob served for more than eight years as director of finance for the City of Lansing.

He also spent over 22 years in various financial management positions with Michigan state government. He served as director of research and statistics for the Department of Treasury; director of the Office of Planning, Budget and Evaluation as well as director of the Budget and Legal Services Administration, Department of Social Services; and staff director for the Committee on Taxation, Michigan House of Representatives.



High School Senior Bob Swanson

H.O.P.E. Scholarship Connections Fund Designated for February Casual Wednesdays

By Lori Donlan, Media & Public Relations

DLEG employees had asked what type of gifts we could give Director Hollister in leaving our department to head a new non-profit economic development organization. Instead of gift certificates or trinkets, we thought the best way to pay tribute to a director who had committed his life to public service was to make a donation to a charity in his name.

Director Hollister initiated Casual Wednesdays more than a year ago on a temporary basis for DLEG employees to help men and women in the military. The activity was such a hit that staff asked if we could continue to dress casually on Wednesdays throughout 2005 (and beyond) and help support other charities. Director Hollister agreed.

So earlier this year, we turned the tables and asked Director Hollister to name his favorite charity for February so that we can donate the funds in his honor. He was very touched by this request, which he considers the best going-away gift he could receive. After some consideration, he asked that the funds go to a charity that is very near and dear to his heart: the H.O.P.E. Scholarship Program.

It is no wonder that Director Hollister, a former teacher, has selected a program that offers youth an opportunity for a college education and a

brighter future. Through the H.O.P.E. Scholarship Program, Lansing School District students are initiated into the program as sixth graders. Students promise to finish high school in exchange for two free years of tuition at Lansing Community College. The students are chosen by their school, based on their ability to utilize the program. For more information about the program, visit <http://www.lansingpolice.com/hope/>.

Donations will be going to the H.O.P.E. Scholarship Program's new "Connection Fund," which provides additional resources to help students achieve their goal of going to college. Gifts are tax-deductible. Here's the address:

H.O.P.E. Scholarship
Connections Fund
Capital Region Community Foundation
6035 Executive Drive, Suite 104
Lansing, MI 48911

Please note on the donation: For "Connections Fund" in honor of David Hollister.

As always, we ask that if you collect donations, please report your contributions to Mary Hines, Finance & Administrative Services (mkhines@michigan.gov) so she can compile an accurate final tally for the department for the year. Last year, DLEG employees generously contributed approximately \$25,000 to charities as a result of Casual Wednesdays. Great job, DLEG employees!



**Thanks to our
January jeans wear-
ers, whose donations
totaled \$1,974 for
Meals on Wheels!**

Special Deliveries

Nicholas Vince, Sheryll Rodgers Exemplify Great Public Service



MRS Division Director Joe Swanson (left) presented Nicholas Vince and Sheryll Rodgers with their Special Deliveries.

Congratulations to Nicholas Vince, counselor, and Sheryll Rodgers, site manager, Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS), who have received Special Deliveries from the Director.

Nicholas and Sheryll were nominated by MRS Division Director Joe Swanson, who wrote: "We are very proud of our staff in Monroe, especially Nicholas and Sheryll. We are also proud of their work

to help people with disabilities obtain employment. The attached letter helps explain why. I believe a Special Delivery from the Director would be a great acknowledgment of their work."

Here is the letter Joe was referring to: "Because of the actions and assistance of your agency, I am again upwardly mobile, restored to productivity and full citizenship in the Great State of Michigan; thank you. Sometimes life's journey strikes and you are unprepared for the results. Due to a family tragedy, my spirit was shaken and I was unable to push through the maze of hurt and pain. I lost my vision and sank into depression. The Monroe office helped me regain my solvency, and instead of being jobless, homeless, and hopeless, they helped me with vital necessities and guidance. Nicholas F. Vince was my rehab counselor and I credit him with saving my sanity, most certainly my self-esteem. He was supportive, a good listener, firm when needed, an activist when necessary, but most of all he was not condescending or judgmental, but respectful and a wonderful servant of the people. It is, after all, the people who make such a service possible. Although I did not turn to crime, addictive behavior or substances (but for the grace of God and good people such as those in the Monroe office), I very well could have. The entire Monroe office is productive, always there and available. All staff members are polite and happy to assist."



Left to right, Al Pohl, Kris Peterson and Dave Thomas.

Al Pohl, Dave Thomas, Kris Peterson and Dennis Sykes Save the Day

Congratulations to Al Pohl, director of Finance and Administrative Services; Dave Thomas, director of Office Services; Kris Peterson, property specialist, Office Services; and Dennis Sykes, former DLEG deputy director, who were presented with Special Deliveries from the Director last month.

The four were nominated by Michigan Rehabilitation Services State Director Jaye N. Shamsiddeen, who wrote: "They demonstrated how to cut through bureaucracy to address a critical safety issue in a timely manner and secure funds from DMB in the face of significant obstacles, which may have saved the state dollars in potential lawsuits and bad press!"

Special Delivery

Audrey Centala Commended for Initiative, Friendliness

Congratulations to Audrey Centala, Securitas Security Services USA, Inc., who has received a Special Delivery from the Director. Audrey is one of the security guards for vehicles and pedestrians entering the upper parking levels at the Ottawa and Hannah buildings.

Audrey was nominated by Robbie Murdock, travel coordinator, Office of Financial Services, who wrote: "I just want to bring special attention and thanks to a security guard at the ramp entrance from the Ottawa surface lot. This morning, as well as during the last snowfall, she cleared a path for us on her own before the gate opened up. So many times people have accidents trying to find their footing when stepping from the curb because we can't see it. I just want to say how thankful I was to see someone take that kind of initiative. She should be commended. She is always very nice to everyone in the morning, anyway. It is nice to be greeted by a friendly, smiling face."



Audrey Centala

"Special Delivery from the Director"

I would like to nominate the following staff member to receive a
"Great Job" acknowledgement from the Director:

Name of Nominee:	Submitted By:
Office/Bureau of Nominee	Job Title of Nominee
Telephone # of Nominator	Office Location of Nominee

The reason I am nominating this person:

Office/Bureau Director:	Date:

**Bureau Directors: Forward to Linda Cook—DLEG Media Office, 4th Floor, Ottawa Building, Lansing
E-mail: CookL1@Michigan.gov --OR-- FAX: 517-241-1580; Phone: 517-241-0199**

Helping With Hurricane Katrina Recovery

By Tom Healy, Michigan Liquor Control Commission

Editor's Note: DLEG expresses appreciation to Tom Healy for his heartfelt assistance to Hurricane Katrina victims.

On Sunday, Sept. 17, 2005, at 10:00 p.m., this DLEG/MLCC employee, with skills more inclined toward cleaning, sweeping, raking and shoveling than toward any form of skilled construction, and 16 others left the Grand Rapids area. We were loaded with bottled water, canned food and other generously donated relief supplies in two vans and a pickup truck for the 18-hour drive to Southern Mississippi.

The goal and common bond among us: we felt compelled toward some more concrete form of action to help our brothers and sisters who were the victims of Hurricane Katrina and the numerous spinoff tornadoes that damaged so much of Southern Mississippi; and also, perhaps, to alleviate the guilt of some past wrong ... just in case. When we left, we knew we had a place to eat, sleep and shower. Beyond that, we didn't really know what to expect.

On arrival, what we found was a landscape of former subdivisions, retail developments, schools, churches, homes and neighborhoods now reduced to so many disorganized and confused piles of broken 2 x 4s, cement blocks, roofs, siding, fences, chairs, refrigerators, cars ... lives. ... That afternoon was spent unloading and sorting boxes of donated food, supplies and clothing, some donated from MLCC co-workers, and organizing it neatly for the many, it turned out, who depended on this makeshift relief center set on a church baseball field under a blue and white circus tent. Those who came had lost their homes and sometimes, everything in it. ...

The area homes were typically built such that the main living area was on what we in Michigan would define as the second floor. Ground level was more like a carport in which to park cars and store stuff. ... As you can guess, the entire ground level had been under water. The main-floor living area, already 8' to 9' off the ground, had also been flooded with 5' to 6' of water as well. The couch and chairs, the beds, dressers, etc., all ended up floating around, coming to rest in different places and covered with the slippery, muddy mix of floodwaters.

In the kitchen, plates, looking like they had been dipped in chocolate, were covered with silt. Inside the kitchen cupboards, above the sink and countertops, glasses were filled with cloudy water looking like they were simply put into the cupboard in a semi-ready to drink state. The soaked and moldy furniture had to be carried down the steps and outside. The slippery, ice-like mud had to be shoveled off the floor into wheelbarrows and poured out windows. ... There was the ever-present stench of black mold irritating our noses and throats. In floods such as this, the salt seawater corrodes all the household wiring. The drywall must be peeled from the 2 x 4 studs, and the studs bleached and scrubbed to remove the mold. Then the wiring needs to be replaced. It is a huge task for one house, times hundreds all over Southern Mississippi.

Most importantly, those several days in Mississippi revealed something very powerful — more powerful than the destructive force of the hurricane, tornadoes or seawater. Those days revealed the power, compassion and resilience of the human spirit. People who lost everything were grateful for what they still had, for their lives and the lives of their family, friends and neighbors. They were grateful for every donated item. The storm caused an outpouring of relief donations, work and workers. People came from across the U.S. to cut trees, re-roof buildings, clean up schools and churches, cook meals and hand out donated supplies. Others drew down their bank accounts to finance relief work and make donations of cash, food, water, clothing, and school and construction supplies. The people of America stood up and demonstrated the goodness that we all long to see in one another. It was truly inspiring!

Much more needs to be done. As of January 2006, there were still over 150 need-verified projects waiting for workers and donations. The needs will continue into the future. The projects take time, financial resources and man/woman-power to complete. Everyone is needed, both skilled and unskilled workers.

For more information, contact <http://www.projecthopeandcompassion.org>. Financial contributions may be sent directly to: Project Hope & Compassion, c/o Ms. Karen Parker, St. Ann's Church, 23529 Hwy. 53 Lizana, Gulfport, MS 39503.



Tom Healy (in back) helped with Hurricane Katrina recovery efforts in Southern Mississippi.

MIOSHA Staff Volunteer to Assist with Hurricanes Katrina and Rita Cleanup

Editor's Note: Nine MIOSHA staff volunteered to help with the recovery efforts following Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. They were DeWayne Cord, Sharman Cross, Bob Dayringer, James Kivell, Keith Langworthy, Matt Macomber, Jim Pike, Barry W. Simmonds and Cindy Zastrow. Below, six of these employees share their experiences. DLEG commends these staff for their caring and generous spirit.

By DeWayne Cord, Construction Safety & Health Division

Our first assignment in New Orleans was intervention with contractors, doing debris cleanup, and FEMA roofs in residential areas. We also did traffic control along right-of-way city streets and fall protection issues during roofing work. The worst flooding from Katrina caused several levees to breach in the lower 9th ward and along the 17th Street Canal.

When the levee breached at the London Canal, everything in its path was wiped out. The folks who lived in the 9th ward lost everything. Many were old and poor people with no means to leave their homes. Some stayed and hoped for the best. Many of the one-story homes had holes cut in the roofs where the residents climbed through or were rescued. Our days were 12 hours long with a lot of driving, which was the hardest part of the assignment. Spending 12 to 14 hours a day with the same person in a vehicle was like the movie "Groundhog Day."

One day our assignment was to locate vegetation burn sites west of NOLA. It took six hours to travel there, and then locate the sites including GPS coordinates. Trees damaged in Hurricanes Katrina and Rita were hauled to these sites and burned. It was difficult to watch logs being destroyed that could have been used for lumber, plywood, etc.

New Orleans is part of America and I hope it will be rebuilt stronger, including the coastline, allowing the natural wetlands to return. This would redirect the sediments from the Mississippi River. The Gulf States are vital to our economy. With another hurricane season in eight months, a lot of work on the levees and infrastructure has to be done to protect the region. It was a privilege to do a small part for the health and safety of New Orleans residents.

By Sharman Cross, General Industry Safety & Health Division

I was assigned to the NOLA (New Orleans, Louisiana) Branch Operation. OSHA's mission was to provide technical assistance and support under the scope of the National Response Plan and OSHA's National Emergency Management Plan. OSHA personnel were assigned to address the safety and health of federally deployed assets (federal employees and contractors). All team members received 12 hours of training prior to assignment.

Our Task Force (TF-5) received assignments daily from the branch director or the division/group supervisor. As an industrial hygienist, I was assigned to conduct health evaluations including sampling for asbestos, silica, respirable dust, freon, carbon monoxide and noise. Samples and intervention forms were processed daily at the NOLA branch office. TF-5 was sent to some of the hardest hit areas, including Orleans Parish and Plaquemines Parish.

By Barry W. Simmonds, Consultation Education & Training Division

I was also assigned to TF-5, and different geographical areas were assigned about every three days. Each day started with some safety reminders and any specific new hazards encountered during the previous operational period. Daily assignments might include scouting an area to determine what activity is being conducted which would require OSHA intervention, perhaps being tasked with working with tree trimmers, or roofers. Sometimes we were to watch dump sites and ensure the vehicle flagging operations were set up correctly and that PPE was worn by everyone. Some teams had specialized bridge-building experience, and they gave technical assistance to the crews repairing bridges. Other teams specialized in asbestos or mold remediation and worked primarily in that field.

Each day officially started at 7 a.m. and ended at 7 p.m. Hours put in after the official time period were not counted. At the end of the shift, we were asked if we'd encountered any specific problems or seen any-



This photo was taken about 45 miles south of New Orleans in Plaquemines Parish. "That is where they had 200 mph winds, and then a 20-foot plus storm surge came in. This was one of several trucks we found that had floated around and sank or finally came to rest once the water left," said Barry Simmonds.

MIOSHA Staff Volunteer to Assist with Hurricanes Katrina and Rita Cleanup (continued)

thing that was out of the ordinary. (Keeping in mind that almost everything was out of the ordinary!) The information was then filtered to decide if significant action had to be taken or if additional help was needed. The teams then signed out, grabbed a bite to eat and collapsed in the hotel to get some much needed sleep — so they could do it all again the next day.

Working seven days a week, and 12-hour operational periods, the “humor” element was quickly tested by being exposed to the extensive destruction and working long days with no time off. However, as we were all volunteers, and knowing we were only there for a short time, people generally made a great effort to keep up the morale and good spirits of the entire group. I ended up spending my birthday down there, and one of my daughters made the statement, “What an awful way to spend your birthday.” However, I think the mission we had, and the tremendous amount of people we impacted, was a great way to spend a birthday. It was quite satisfying to be a part of this!

By Keith Langworthy, MIOSHA Asbestos Program

We arrived at the New Orleans, Louisiana, operations center located at the Superdome Holiday Inn on Nov. 27. We were issued identification, accountability and emergency information cards. Supplies and an introductory briefing were also provided. During the operational briefing the following day, we were charged to seek and identify work areas and work operations of federal sub-contractors and to perform hazard assessments of the work activities. Our operational unit was designated as Task Force 4 (TF-4).

The processes we reviewed are best characterized as collection, handling and reduction of construction and vegetative debris (emergency cleanup). We also observed several residential and commercial construction and demolition activities. The hazards we observed were varied, but consisted primarily of traffic control issues, potential electrocution from contact with energized lines, and asbestos hazards from intact and non-intact cement-asbestos roofing and siding debris.

Our work area covered several parishes (counties) in Southern Louisiana. As a team, TF-4 performed numerous health- and safety-related interdictions that were documented by OSHA. The employees we interviewed understood that our interest was their welfare. The employers we advised ranged from unwilling and obstinate to caring and compassionate. This did not differ from what we experience daily. Through the performance of our duties, we also spoke with many local residents and observed the battered remains of a strong local culture. The people we engaged were eager to learn from our observations in their neighborhoods and glad that we were there to help. For us the experience offered insight and understanding of the desire of the New Orleans communities to rebuild and revive their city and region.

By James Kivell, General Industry Safety & Health Division

Nearly everywhere we went, we observed damage of some type or another, smelled unique aromas from buildings and debris piles, and saw people trying to restore some sense of normality amongst less than adequate conditions. Some areas looked fairly normal until you noticed watermarks on walls from just above ground level to eight feet up the walls. Other areas were filled with sludge, debris, downed trees, crushed cars and “blue” roofs.

Unfortunately, we also encountered folks who didn’t use PPE, didn’t guard equipment, failed to establish safe working conditions, exposed themselves to traffic, and disregarded fall protection, as well as supervisors who didn’t seem to care about correcting issues. Yet, we also saw folks doing the jobs correctly, Red Cross trucks feeding people on street corners, and sanitation stations with porta-potties, and bottled water and hand-cleaning materials in areas where debris was being handled.

The biggest physical hazard was TRAFFIC. The first week traffic was fairly light, and most vehicles seemed to observe the traffic control devices (lights when working or stop signs). By the second week the traffic had gotten heavy, and we saw drivers ignoring lights and signs. In one instance, numerous cars drove over the highway shoulder to use an on-ramp to access a side street to avoid a traffic backup.

Air monitoring was also a problem. While workers were wearing respirators and gear, teachers were entering and exiting their schools without any PPE to get materials and supplies out of classrooms. One teacher I talked to stated that she was only in there for about three hours and didn’t see a need for wearing any PPE.

That’s about all there is to say: we went, we worked, we returned, we did what we could to help.

MIOSHA Staff Volunteer to Assist with Hurricanes Katrina and Rita Cleanup (continued)

Cindy Zastrow, Consultation Education and Training Division

I was deployed Nov. 11 as a member of the DMORT (Disaster Mortuary Operational Response Team) Region V Team to the St. Gabriel Base Camp/Morgue in St. Gabriel, La. DMORT is a Federal Level Response team designed to provide mortuary assistance in the case of a mass fatality incident or cemetery-related incident. We work under the local jurisdictional authorities such as coroners/medical examiners, law enforcement and emergency managers. Work hours were 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., seven days per week, with additional hours when necessary. Our physical and mental health needs were of the utmost importance, with daily medical monitoring and on-site counseling services.

The personnel that I worked with were the epitome of professionalism. Dealing with some very physically and emotionally trying circumstances, these individuals gave their all, never complained, and treated each victim with the respect and dignity that they deserved. As always, it was an honor to serve with them.

We Get Letters ... and E-mails!

Patti Young and Deveone Gilbert with the Michigan Public Service Commission's (MPSC) Motor Carrier, Energy Grants and Information Division received accolades from MJL Trucking, Inc., Clinton Township. In a letter to the MPSC, the company noted Patti's and Deveone's thorough knowledge of motor carrier regulations and their general helpfulness; they "made the process not so intimidating" and "less stressful."

Marcie Brink-Chaney, a rehabilitation counselor with the Michigan Commission for the Blind in Detroit, received this complimentary letter after she gave a presentation at the Meer Apartments in West Bloomfield: "On behalf of the Meer Apartments residents, I would like to thank you for volunteering your time to host an informational meeting on the services provided through the Michigan Commission for the Blind. The residents enjoyed the presentation and coping tools you suggested. I have spoken to the social worker at Hechtman Jewish Apartments . . . and she, too, is interested in hosting a presentation for the residents at Hechtman. . . . Thank you again for visiting us at Meer; it was a pleasure to have met you and to learn about your services!"

Rosanne Renauer, site manager of the Lansing office, Michigan Rehabilitation Services, received the following letter from a client of Counselor **Roy DeValle**: "DLEG may not have found the actual job I ended up with, but what helped the most was building my confidence. Taking the CAD class at Lansing Community College proved to me that I could still learn, and it was actually easier because of my background in engineering. The counseling also helped rebuild my confidence. My job with ArvinMeritor is similar to the job I had before in engineering heavy truck axle end products. They have excellent people programs. Thank you and your people for doing a fine job."

A client of the Battle Creek office of Michigan Rehabilitation Services who has become newly employed sent this letter to Site Manager **Vicki Rafferty**: "I've worked with [Counselor] **Allah Jean Truman** over these past years. She has been most polite, helpful and courteous to me, beyond helpful. It was nice to have someone to bounce things to — an extra mom-like person!"

The Management and Technical Services Division, Michigan Occupational Safety and Health Administration, received a telephone call from Attorney **Bill McNeal**, who wanted to personally thank **Lisa Leik** and others for their hard work on a FOI request. He said the information Lisa provided was exactly what he needed and that he really appreciated everyone dropping everything to personally work on it. He apologized for the short notice he provided. He also indicated that he is planning to write a letter to the governor commending Lisa and others for their work on this request.

Cletonya LaGrand, Corporation Division, Commercial Services, heard from a satisfied customer, who wrote: "I just wanted to send this card to let you know how much I so appreciate all the help you provided me. You were very patient with me while I was trying to negotiate through the application procedures and the incorporation documents related to the IRS tax exempt 501c3 application. You directed me by phone on exactly how I needed to word our documentation. If I had to depend on written correspondence, it would have taken me forever to get it right. This was particularly important since I had a very ambitious timeline to respond back to the IRS. The excellent work that you do and the long hours you spend as a public servant to provide support to all of us in the State of Michigan is a blessing, and we thank you for it."

